

# Politics, Land and Religion in Colonial Natal: The Dilemmas of Missionary Trust

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This is an essay on the relationship between 'church and state' in colonial times in South Africa, a relationship that was mediated by control of land. Land, entrusted in parcels to missionary bodies, as bounded fields of evangelical labour among the Zulu residents, had the effect of enlisting the missionaries as administrative officers of a weak embryonic state. While missionary bodies sought ways of resolving the inherent ambiguities of being 'landholder', the colonial state waxed stronger, becoming unambiguously locked into white settler interests, and began to place a different political and commercial value on the land. The relationship soured from a complementary partnership to one of bitter opposition as the state, through its chosen instrument, the Commission of Enquiry, relieved the missionaries of their trusteeship.

Although set in the colonial period, 1848-1910, this article is not an attempt to construct an historical narrative of the times (for which cf. Duminy and Guest, 1989), nor yet is it an essay on the history of missions,<sup>1</sup> not even of a particular missionary body such as the American Zulu Mission (for which cf. Switzer, 1971). The object of study is not 'a segment of time as a sequence of empirical events' (Cohn, 1980, 220), for which purpose the tracing of a path through the thick and complex minutiae of detailed interaction between historical agents would be essential. Instead, the chosen focus is on a theme and on the construction of an argument in relation to that theme. The theme is the growth and transformation of the fledgling colonial state of Natal. The argument follows the line that, as the colonial state matured with a corresponding change in composition and policy, its disposition towards fixed resources such as land shifted and, consequently, its attitude towards the keepers of the land, foremost among whom were the missionary trustees, also dramatically changed.

The state's relation to the missionaries moved from initial collaboration to one of conflict and confrontation; from an early dependence on a partnership with the missionaries to regarding them as obstacles to its own economic development. The missionaries were not able to anticipate the changing climate and the effect it was to have on them. Consequently, they were caught up in a succession of dilemmas from which they were unable fully to extricate themselves.

Two years after wresting possession of Natal from the migrating Boers, Britain established it as a Crown Colony subordinate to the Cape in 1845. It was given separate government under the Colonial Office in 1856, following a large influx of British settlers. The colony existed precariously and fretfully in the shadow of the powerful Zulu kingdom to the north, until the defeat and dismemberment of the Zulu nation in 1884 and its final annexation three years later. The immediate and most pressing problem of the fledgling colony was how to settle and govern an estimated population of 100 thousand Africans, a great proportion of whom were returnees to their ancestral land following the dislocation caused by Zulu conquests. Theophilus Shepstone, placed in charge of Native Affairs, 'solved' this problem by establishing tracts of land as Native Locations, wherein tribal chiefships were restored or created as parts of a system of indirect rule. Serving on the commission set up to carve out the locations, besides Shepstone and two government officers, were two American missionaries, both Congregationalists from the American Board of Missions, which had a prior stake in the region.<sup>2</sup> Their function was to assist in the creation of a number (eventually 21) of Mission Reserves to be allocated to different missionary societies and, of these, no less than eleven were granted to the American Zulu Mission (AZM), controlled and supported by the American Board in Boston. In extent, these reserves varied from six to ten thousand acres each and the missionary body assumed the responsibility of administering these large territories, a costly burden on slender financial resources. There was a sense, therefore, in which the mission reserves belonged to or were 'owned' by missionaries, in much the same sense held by Zulus of a chief 'owning' the territory over which he exercised jurisdiction. Each mission reserve was identified with a particular missionary society. The society's work was thus accorded a precisely fixed physical and material shape i.e. the land entrusted to it. In short, the mission was fatally identified with the land.

### The Nature of Trust

Deeds of grant were issued from 1862 onwards, by which time most of the mission reserves were accomplished facts on the basis of a verbal transaction. The Deed did not confer outright ownership of the land on the missionaries. The land was ceded to the missionary society "in trust for Natives, with the

intent and object that the said lands may be occupied and inhabited by Natives, in order that the said missionary body may have a fixed population to labour among as missionaries without let or hindrance" (Lands Commission Report, 1902, 24). There were several strands of meaning to this trust accepted by the missionaries, each of which had implications for the materialisation of mission and which, joined together in this way, were to catch the missionaries in a conflict of interests. The most obvious of these was that the land was to be an enclave of exclusive African habitation. When the idea of the Reserves was first conceived, they were to be much larger areas complete with agricultural and mechanical training schools for native upliftment. Britain declined to meet the costs of such an ambitious undertaking and, in the scaled-down version, the inhabitants were to be left to pursue their way of life relatively undisturbed and secure under British protection. The Trust conferred the role of 'caretaker of property and residents' on the missionaries for an undefined period. Beyond that, the question of ownership of the land was not clearly determined. Whether the grant had transferred ownership to the occupants, or envisaged such a transfer and the lapse of the trust at some future time, or whether it was an acknowledgment of original ownership on the part of the residents collectively was never fully resolved.<sup>3</sup> The trust was shrouded in ambiguity.

The second strand of the trust was that the reserve was constituted as a locus of missionary evangelisation, in which a missionary society could pursue its declared aims untrammelled by competition. The reserve defined the parameters of missionary aspirations and operations. The society had the exclusive right to recruit on that piece of ground; no other missionary agency could trespass upon it. In effect, the trust created a spiritual domain in which the society exercised a monopoly, a spiritual concession with physical dimensions, a piece of earth that could yield a spiritual harvest.<sup>4</sup>

The third strand of the trust was much less overt. Entirely unstated within the 'intent and object' of the grant was the assumption that missionary labour would be civilising work, that of converting pastoral movement to settled residence, speeding the acceptance of European values and, above all, removing a large body of Africans from the jurisdiction of chiefs and placing them directly under European control. In other words, the mission reserve was to be a device for the furtherance of orderly government; it was to be a nursery of conformity to the moral norms of London and Boston. To this purpose, while the land was vested in its inhabitants, control of it was withheld from them and given to the missionaries. In effect, the missionaries were being recruited as unofficial government officers within the overall system of indirect control of the African population. As agents of the state, they were implicitly charged with the maintenance of good governance within their territory and with securing the orderly conduct of the native population.

It is almost a truism that missionaries were commonly pressed into service

as mediators and conduits between indigenous people and nascent colonial states. The one looked to them for the protection, skills and new resources that they could provide; the other perceived them as 'Trojan horses' for pacifying and subduing the subject people. In Natal, these roles were grounded in, and transformed by, a grant of land, not in outright ownership but in a manner that locked the missionaries into a double stewardship; stewards of government and stewards of fixed local resources, while the missionaries themselves came to accept that they were stewards of their African charges. It should be noted that the intrinsic economic value and potential of the land was not a primary consideration in the creation of the mission reserves. The land had not yet come to be invested with material value of its own; rather it served as the materialisation of other goals and values of a religious and political nature. The landlocking of missions in Natal provided a closed market for spiritual goods and located religion firmly in an earthly domain. The role of the missionary was also less subtly refined by being sandwiched between two additional and quite secular roles; that of custodian of native possessions, which made the local populace wards of the mission, and that of government agent which, to some extent, made the local people the political subjects of the missionary.

However one unravels the implications of the Deed of Grant and the obscurity of the intentions behind it, it effectively recreated the missionary in the guise of landholder. How the missionaries themselves interpreted their status of landholder was to have further practical consequences for the materialisation of mission, bearing in mind that before 1862 there was no written instruction to guide (or confuse) them. As was to be expected under such circumstances of indetermination, the different mission societies interpreted their mandate variously. Nevertheless, the general tendency was to exceed it. The most obvious excess was to extend their primary role as trustee and custodian of the land into that of landlord. To meet the costs of administering the territory entrusted to them, for which the slim resources at their disposal for missionary purposes was palpably inadequate, the missionaries did not have to look far to discover a means of raising additional revenue. They charged the residents for occupation of the land. They could scarcely be accused of profiteering, since the charge was modest enough and what was garnered was put to communal use. It was never adequate, because as rent-collectors they lacked the sanction of removing defaulters from the reserve. Nevertheless, they would later come to recognise that the principle of levying a rent was iniquitous. In a letter to an American colleague, Sivetja (an African pastor in the AZM) pronounced: "this (rent) is the bad plant that we planted, that has grown into a mischievous tree".<sup>5</sup> How the mischief grew from it is something that I will return to later, but it would certainly pervert the second feature of the trust, that of providing a pool of potential African converts. As will be seen, instead of merely demarcating a field of evangelical opportunity, the land was unashamedly used by way of 'stick and carrot' to induce conversion. The

third, more latent, element of the trust was also distorted by missionary practice, though not in all cases. Some missionaries had pressed well beyond their role as moral watchdogs of government to regard the mission reserve as a personal fief, to be milked of revenue for the upkeep of themselves and their work. German missionaries, in particular, exercised civil powers over residents of the reserve, by imposing penalties and fines and generally behaving as petty potentates. These excesses and distortions of the trust, leading to an even grosser materialisation of mission, had flourished without interference, while the Colony was ruled from London. They were soon brought to light when Natal acquired its own independent government in 1893.

Perhaps a more fundamental reason than the governance of Africans for setting up reserves for exclusively African occupation was that of preserving the rest of the land for acquisition by white settlers. The best land, in generous portions, soon passed into the ownership of the settler minority which, thereafter, began to look covetously at the mission reserves, particularly those of the Americans located in the fertile coastal belt. If these lands could be 'liberated', they could be used as bait to attract fresh settlers from Britain, who would add economic and political muscle to settler interests. The mission reserves were, therefore, the object of continuous settler sniping, e.g. the native residents were indolent and disorderly and the Americans were teaching them a dangerous republican doctrine. Clearly, the settlers took an unashamedly materialist view of the mission society and its operations, precisely because of the desirability of the land under its control. They openly expressed disfavour towards the privileged existence of the reserves and criticised the British policy of native protectionism. This simmering antagonism, aroused by the materialisation of mission, remained impotent until the settlers were allowed to elect their own government, when it erupted into open confrontation.<sup>6</sup>

### Undermining the Trust

The opening skirmish, that left the missionaries bloodied, occurred when the Attorney-General (AG) called a meeting of mission representatives in 1893 to clarify the meaning of the Deed of Trust and to eliminate its inherent ambiguity. The hidden agenda behind this innocent facade was to discredit the missionary trustees. A verbatim transcript of the meeting<sup>7</sup> shows how the missionaries were first manipulated and then routed. They had worked such variety into the interpretation of the Deed in practice that they were at odds with one another and could not present a united front across denominational differences. One recurring complaint, however, was their inability to remove what they termed 'undesirable and objectionable people' who were a hindrance to missionary work, and to prevent chiefs in their areas from exercising their normal right to allocate land to newcomers. Clearly, the African population on the reserves was

anything but 'fixed', as the Deed stipulated. Africans moved freely between reserves and locations in pursuit of reigning self-interest. They did not recognise the reserves as separate geographical enclosures, but as an integral part of a wider field of opportunity to be exploited by freedom of movement.

The AG was enthusiastic about blocking the powers of chiefs and subtly reworded the terms of the Deed from "having a fixed population to labour among" to "*bringing* a fixed population *onto* the land"(my emphasis). What this implied was the selective recruitment of those with a Christian disposition to reside on the land and the corresponding weeding out of polygamists and those trading in intoxicating drink (both classed as 'objectionable elements'). In other words, a clause was added to superimpose a more definitive religious impress on the land: occupation of the land would be conditional on conformity to a Christian moral code. Being African and living on the land would no longer be sufficient entitlement. Missionary support for this principle was evident in a proposal to trade rent for religious inclination. An expressed desire to abandon heathenism and to send their children to school would relieve residents and newcomers of the burden of paying rent. In this way, the relation between land and religion, and hence the intention of the original Grant, was being reconstructed. While the land was originally a means of bringing residents within the ambit of Christianity, religion would now be the means of gaining access to the land. And the Reserve was being reconstituted, from an area of African occupation with a missionary presence to a Christian enclave in which missionaries were dominant.

At the end of the discussion, the AG unilaterally resolved that (a) the land would continue to be Native Trust; (b) a set of conditions, legally binding on all residents, would regulate their conduct<sup>8</sup> and (c) control of the mission reserves should pass "from the jurisdiction of chiefs to the Natal Native Trust" (an arm of government already in control of the locations). This last resolution completely brushed aside the autonomy of missionary trustees, who were to be absorbed into the Natal Native Trust as government appointees whom the governor had the power to remove. Two years later, these provisions were passed into law, with the additional imposition of a fixed annual rent (30 shillings per household). As collectors of this revenue, only half of which was to be retained for the maintenance of the reserves, the missionaries still had no means of bringing evaders to book, no more than they could enforce the by-laws upholding a Christian code of conduct for residents.

### **Missionary Ambivalence**

Among themselves, the Americans complained more and more of the onerous burden of managing the reserves and began to consider how they could with honour relieve themselves of it. Other developments, emanating from their

sponsoring society in Boston, made it all the more compelling to loosen the material yoke of the mission land. Boston had become impatient with the comparatively slow rate of conversion of the AZM and especially with its failure to form self-supporting Christian communities among the Zulu, the explicit goal of its missionary outreach. Why commit human and financial resources to the AZM, when more spectacular results were being achieved elsewhere? Steadily starved of fresh personnel, the Zulu mission was unable to man all its stations and, by 1900, several reserves had been without a resident missionary for many years, a situation certainly aggravated by tardiness in raising up black pastors. Faced with these diminishing resources, the policy of the AZM turned towards a concentration on education in good schools served by lay volunteers from America. Missionary pastors were redeployed as supervisors of circuits consisting of several mission reserves.

The reserves could not be simply wished away. In good conscience, the missionaries could not walk away from their Trust and from the reserve residents, the more vociferous Christian minority of whom at least were adamant that they should not. The only solution that was congruent with the obligations of trusteeship was to dispose of the land in plots of freehold tenure to individual residents. In terms of the conditions of grant, the trustees had always enjoyed the right to confer freehold title on those occupying the land and the Americans alone had exercised that right to a considerable extent on two of their oldest reserves, while they were sole trustees, by selling 15 acre plots at a nominal cost of two pounds an acre, the going price of a cow. What was now contemplated as a solution to their problem, urged by the residents themselves, was the extension of the freehold system to all the land within their reserves.

Proposed to the Natal Native Trust in 1900 was a scheme "to survey the reserves into plots and to allot them to residents under terms appended by the trustees" (Trustees to AGM of the AZM).<sup>9</sup> Foremost among these terms was the condition that no polygamist could hold title to a plot; the most he could enjoy was lifetime leasehold. This condition cloaked a profound missionary ambivalence towards the scheme. On the one hand, transfer of the land to the residents was the only just way in which the trust could be terminated. Yet, once a man possessed freehold title, there was nothing to prevent him from reverting to polygamy or from selling to a polygamist. While this was not their only reservation concerning a loss of religious control,<sup>10</sup> the tendency for ownership to confer freedom from the shackles of Christian moral norms had been all too painfully demonstrated in their earlier experiments with freehold tenure. It had been for this reason that the missionaries had suspended the sale of freehold land in 1868. Once again, an implicit equation was being drawn between the exercise of religious influence and the control of vital material resources.<sup>11</sup> To yield the one would be at the cost of losing the other.

## Detaching the Land

While the missionaries were reluctantly confronting the freehold solution to the problems of materialisation, Natal became embroiled in the war (1899-1902) between Britain and the Boer republics. These hostilities did not deter the colonists from mounting a more aggressive attack on the mission reserves in an attempt to wrest them from missionaries and African occupants alike. It took the form of the Lands Commission set up in 1900. The commission may be seen as an instrument for disengaging the mission from its material base, a goal towards which the missionaries themselves were also working. However, its brief was to find a more surgical solution than that contemplated by the missionaries. Among its terms of reference was the investigation of denominational land. This was at the instigation of 51 white farmers, whose petition claimed that the land in question had not been beneficially used for the purpose for which it was given and did not seem likely to be so used in the future. The commission was charged with investigating the position, value, income and usage of these lands "with a view to determining whether they should revert to the state for undenominational or other purposes". The more inclusive terms of the commission was "to advise as to the acquisition by government of suitable lands in the colony for the settlement of persons who will beneficially occupy and improve it" (Lands Commission, Report, 1902, 1). It had been decided that what the Colony was most in need of at the end of the war was a fresh injection of British settlers. It did not have to be said that one rather obvious means of attracting new settlers was the release of the mission lands for white occupation, particularly the 66 thousand acres of prime land held by the AZM in the sugar-cane farming belt. This was the plum the commission was meant to pick.

Commissions of enquiry have aroused much scepticism regarding their capacity to arrive at the truth. Ashforth (1990) has perceptively analysed the 'grand tradition' of South African commissions preoccupied with 'the Native Question' and has demonstrated how they contrived a process and constructed a discourse which would yield official truth. The procedure is so designed to uphold and promote the sovereignty of the state, by giving it the backing of scientific truth delivered by "expert witnesses who know"(30). If not exactly in the 'grand tradition', the Natal Lands Commission foreshadowed the line of commissions leading to and following the Union of South Africa, that Ashforth investigated. It did not ostensibly address 'the Native Question'. Nevertheless, it invoked the sovereign power of the state to take away what it had given, specifically to strip Africans of the choicest land still available to them. Only the missionaries stood in the way of this design and their opposition was hopelessly compromised.

The evidence heard by the commission forms a text of some 500 dense pages, in which one may discern three major criticisms being levelled at the mission reserves. The first was that they were not sufficiently controlled. The

sharing of responsibility between government and missionary trustees meant that each could deny or abdicate responsibility for settling disputes in favour of the other. Public order was consequently weakened, the reserves had become the refuge of the disorderly and indolent, an escape from discipline and supervision. What was needed was undivided government control and industrial training of the inhabitants. The American missionaries were especially picked upon, either for exercising too much control as landlords, or exercising too little of it by abandoning their mission stations.

Even more to the liking of the commissioners was the second allegation that the land was not being profitably used; the missionaries had taught 'the natives' all sorts of things except work. Asked bluntly if these lands were being used to the best interests of the colony, the American missionary Kilbon first tried to deflect the question (it was not directed to religious interests) and then had to give an evasive answer; yes, in terms of a religious and educational contribution, but they could be more productive in commercial terms. He tried to push the solution of giving title deeds to the occupants, but this was simply brushed aside (Lands Commission, Evidence, 51). Other evidence (218, 301) depicted Africans as erratic cultivators, only when they needed to, quite the opposite of the model industrious farmer. The land could be turned into 'a veritable garden', if given in lots of 200 acres to European settlers (217, 400).

Finally, the granting of freehold tenure to residents came under fire, and the fact that the Americans had arrested the practice was cited as proof enough of its defects. Grave concern was expressed that there was no longer any control over the disposition of freehold land and, time and again, the spectre was raised of it getting into the hands of Indians, a prospect almost too terrible to contemplate.

The testimony of a handful of Africans to come before the commission was muted and restrained. They were virtually confined to saying that they valued the presence of missionaries for their ability to settle disputes (262), thus unwittingly contributing to the tendency to regard the absence of American missionaries as a dereliction of duty and a source of civil disorder.

The Report of the commission was unabashedly selective, emphasising the withholding of freehold tenure by the missionaries while disregarding their support for its renewal. Undue prominence was given to the government perspective, citing the Secretary of Native Affairs that the reserves were now 'trouble spots' (25), and the first Prime Minister to the effect that the 'locking up' of this land had been a false and fatal philanthropy, the result of which was to keep it waste and wild. On the management of the reserves, the commissioners expressed reservations as to the propriety of influences of ownership being coupled with missionary influences. Among its recommendations, the commission thought it 'imperative' for government to have full powers to expropriate any land in the Colony (33). It advocated that the reserves should pass into the

undivided control of the Natal Native Trust (31) and it urged legislation to prevent alienation of existing freehold plots to other than 'natives' (27). These provisions became law in the Mission Reserves Act of 1903, thus effectively terminating missionary trusteeship and dismantling the materialisation of mission. No action was taken, however, to dispossess the occupants of the land, because of opposition, it was surmised, from the Secretary of Native Affairs (Trustees to AZM, 1903).<sup>12</sup>

Predictably, the missionaries were dismayed by the findings of the commission, having been assured beforehand of a sympathetic hearing for the re-introduction of freehold tenure. The American trustees called it a 'surprising' document. Its "disregard for the truth, ignoring of evidence, resort to assumptions, its degrading of a good cause and of honest men made it more worthy of scheming lawyers than of gentlemen of integrity" (Trustees to AZM, 1902).<sup>13</sup> They were acutely aware that the reserve residents were accusing them of betrayal, by refusing to convert the land to freehold ownership while it had been still possible to do so.

None of the findings of the commission were in any sense novel. They expressed sentiments, aspirations and designs that had long been current among the colonists. The missionaries were naively deceived into thinking that they were collaborating in the search for a solution to their dilemma that was premised on truth and honesty. As Ashforth has rightly claimed (1990, 6-7), the commission of enquiry is a theatre of power and its sittings are an elaborate symbolic ritual. This commission<sup>14</sup> was no exception. It was essentially a political process, in which a scheme of legitimation was being fashioned to justify actions deemed necessary for the future of the colonial state and for the protection of the interests it represented. While in this sense the issue was state power, the exercise of that power was concentrated on the material trappings of mission and was bent upon detaching the mission from its material base in the land, with a view to absorbing this resource into its own burgeoning domain. The ambivalence of the missionaries towards the retention of the reserves left them vulnerable to this *tour de force* of state expansion.

## Conclusion

The missionary dilemmas arising from the Trust were manifold and cumulative. Firstly, the missionaries were set up as estate managers, but how to acquit themselves of this task without operating revenue? Their solution was to extract levies or rent from the residents. Secondly, this action cast them in the role of landlords who had no legitimate claim to ownership and placed them in the false position of materially exploiting their charges.<sup>15</sup> The way out of this dilemma was to restore ownership of the land to the occupants. But, thirdly, once land was ceded in freehold to residents, the missionary no longer had any

hold over them and some readily reverted to 'pagan' practices. To get out of this bind, the missionaries summarily suspended the issuing of freehold tenure. Fourthly, when they finally proposed a wholesale renewal of freehold ownership as a means of unbundling the Trust, they stood accused of ambivalence towards the scheme in the past and from this they were unable to extricate themselves. Throughout the period of trusteeship, the missionaries were caught up in a fifth predicament, in that they were trustees without 'teeth'. Without the power to impose legal or secular sanctions on recalcitrant chiefs and residents, who might withhold rent payment or refuse to comply with trustee regulations, they were unable to exercise effective control over the reserves and were consistently open to the charge of failing in their duties as trustees.

At the basis of their several dilemmas were the contradictions inherent in the nature of the stake given to the missionary societies in their exclusive territorial workshops, contradictions that became more acute with the passage of time and the growth of state power. Firstly, the land itself was contested terrain, subject to contrasting definition by different interest groups. For the missionary, it constituted a guaranteed bounded field of legitimate labour, whereas its African inhabitants viewed it as a vital substructure underpinning an established pattern of culture, and the colonists perceived it as a desirable economic resource that was squandered on 'natives'. These irreconcilable differences were a recipe for conflict and confrontation, the outcome of which would ultimately rest on disparities of power and political will. Secondly, the role of the missionary trustee was hopelessly compromised. The missionaries were genuinely committed to the inculcation of 'civilised' moral standards among the population entrusted to them and to their economic advancement. At the same time, they functioned as petty officials in the reserves and in other ways conducted themselves as virtual landlords. A dedication to social upliftment, itself problematic, rested uneasily with the exploitation of the population, manifested in the extraction of revenue, giving with one hand and taking with the other. Finally, in their role as missionaries, they were caught in a contradiction between expectation and reality. Their Boston sponsors placed a high premium on the harvesting of souls and the winning of converts. Because Zulus were for a long time intractable to conversion, the AZM was perceived to fall behind other mission fields in a strictly numbers game and was consequently starved of support. Yet it desperately needed that support to hold on to its modest gains in a battle against recidivism. The control of converts presupposed the control of land, but that control could not be exercised without the continued flow of resources from Boston. Advocates of a progressive programme aimed at delivering enlightened independence to their Zulu charges, the missionaries settled for a narrowly conservative agenda of containment and constraint. It was the profound reluctance to yield the ground of their control over converts that fatally flawed their 'final' solution to the dilemmas of trusteeship.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> An anonymous reader has generously pointed out that this article addresses an important gap in the history of missions. However, I completely concur with Rich (1995,206) that 'the missionary role in the development of the trusteeship doctrine has yet to be written for South Africa'.
- <sup>2</sup> The congregationalists serving on the Locations Commission were Henry Adams and Daniel Lindley.
- <sup>3</sup> Whatever the legal niceties of the issue, to this day ownership of these trust lands is to all intents and purposes vested in the South African state (cf. Kiernan, 1987).
- <sup>4</sup> For the social background of these missionaries, particularly those of a Methodist and Congregationalist persuasion, and for the religious dimension of their spiritual quest, cf. Comaroff and Comaroff (1991, 77-85).
- <sup>5</sup> cf. Box A/2/29, American Board Inventory.
- <sup>6</sup> This opposition became all the more determined when, from 1897 onwards, white farmers regularly formed the majority in the Natal parliament.
- <sup>7</sup> Anomalously, this document is filed under 'correspondence' in the American Board Inventory, Box A/2/29.
- <sup>8</sup> These conditions became part of a civil code, approved in 1901, that imposed Christian norms of behaviour on all who wished to stay on the land.
- <sup>9</sup> cf. American Board Inventory, Box A/1/7.
- <sup>10</sup> Goodenough letter to AZM, 1990, in American Board Inventory, Box A/2/28
- <sup>11</sup> Further confirmation of this assumption is provided by Etherington (1978, 39,58) in relation to the Catholic missionary, Allard, who used his title to land to compel attendance at his sermons.
- <sup>12</sup> cf. American Board Inventory, Box A/1/9.
- <sup>13</sup> cf. American Board Inventory, Box A/1/8.
- <sup>14</sup> Note that this Lands Commission (Natal) was not among the South African commissions examined by Ashforth.
- <sup>15</sup> Etherington (1978, 149) cites an Anglican evangelist, who referred to the Kholwa complaint about missionaries 'that they were more interested in ruling the people as kings and filling the coffers of their societies than in making Christians'. (Ama)Kholwa is an indigenous term for African Christians.

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